



The Monthly Newsletter of the
West Parish Church of Andover
United Church of Christ

WEST PARISH CHURCH

United Church of Christ
129 Reservation Road
Andover, MA 01810-3430
(978) 475-3528
westparishchurch@verizon.net
www.westparishchurch.org

Sundays 9:00 AM

Adult Education
Children's Music & Arts

Sundays 10:00 AM

Worship & Sunday School

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FEBRUARY HI-LIGHTS

WORSHIP

February 5th ~ 10:00 AM Worship First
Sunday/Communion/New Members Join
Rev. Katrina Preaching

February 12th ~ 10:00 AM Worship
Rev. Katrina Preaching

February 19th ~ 10:00 AM Worship
Victoria Gaisford Preaching

February 26th ~ 10:00 AM Worship
Rev. Katrina Preaching

CHILI-COOKOFF

February 4th, 6:30 PM

This year our cook off will be on "Superbowl weekend" so here's your chance to experiment with a new recipe or just show off your favorite one. If you have a friend that enjoys making or eating chili, please invite them so they can experience our style of community.

You do not need to make chili to enjoy this event, everyone is welcome. If you are leery of spicy food, historically, most have been on the mild side so you should be ok.

Sign-up for this year's event in Fellowship Hall or contact Ed Pass at ep0260@yahoo.com or (978) 337-0587. The event will be held at the home of Helen Long at 17 Hartford Circle in Andover. Hartford Circle is off of Abbot Bridge Rd which is by the Horn Bridge and the Shawsheen River on Central St. Hope to see you there.



WPCEVENTS

February 4th ~ Chili Cook-Off
(see pg. 1 for details)

February 9th ~ Women's Evening
Circle in Fellowship Hall (see pg. 4
for details)

February 11th ~ Valentine's Day
Parents Night Out Fellowship Hall
(see pg. 3 for details)



Ed Pass
Ministry of Fellowship



FROM THE DESK OF Rev. Katrina Wuensch

Beloved People of West Parish,

We made it through! You did it! We have survived the most depressing day of the year! That's right: "scientists" have calculated that the third Monday in January is "the most depressing day of the year" due to the holidays being over, bills coming due, lack of sunlight, cold weather, and the end of winter still months away. This January posed particular challenges as our country seemed thrust into political and social turmoil.

Whether or not you agree with this "most depressing day" conclusion, and whether or not you found mid-January to be a challenging time, there are real reasons to rejoice this month:

1. The days ARE getting longer! There is noticeably more light in our days! In fact, the spring equinox is just about 6 weeks away.
2. Valentine's Day is in February! Regardless of your relationship status, this is a day to give thanks for all the forms of love in our lives, and a day to live out God's love in the world – to all people.
3. We're receiving new members on February 5! Get ready to shower these new folks with your welcome!
4. It's the Chili cook-off this month! Could anything be more cozy and welcoming than tasting hot bowls of yummy chili with church friends?!
5. Women's Evening Circle will be holding a Game Night! Seriously, I think our souls need time to relax and enjoy the company of other women in a loving, supportive place.
6. On February 15, we have the opportunity to begin a town-wide conversation on race with a film at the library. After hearing LaKisha's sermon, I am energized anew for the critical importance of these conversations.
7. And we'll get to hear Victoria preach! Yay!

So even though the weather might be dreary and the news frightening and the demands on our days might be heavy, our church is a place to receive hope, courage and support for our journeys. So come and join us in February for this "in-between" season! (Because on March 1 we dive right into Lent!) Blessings to you all!

-Katrina

UCC NEWS! MASSACHUSETTS, CONNECTICUT & RHODE ISLAND CONFERENCE MERGER

The Boards of Directors of the Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island conferences have voted unanimously to commit to forming a new Conference to minister and come together to make an impact as people of faith.

They will ask the Annual Meetings of the three Conferences, being held together June 16 and 17, to endorse their intent to draft a proposal for a new Conference. The Boards would then bring that specific proposal to another joint Annual Meeting in 2018 for ratification.

For more information visit the Massachusetts United Church of Christ website at: <http://www.macucc.org>.



CONTACTING KATRINA

As a reminder, Katrina is at the church Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday. Monday is her day off, and Friday she works at home.

You can reach her by email at: revkatrina@yahoo.com or through the church phone (978-475-3528 x201).



If you leave a voicemail, she is notified immediately via email, so can respond as soon as possible to a pastoral emergency.

CONFIRMATION

In February our confirmands and mentors will be meeting on their own to share each other's spiritual journeys (i.e. how have your beliefs changed over time, what significant experiences have you had, where have you gone to church, etc.)

We will meet February 12 and 26 at 11:00 AM in the Youth Room.





VICTORIA GAISFORD
DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION

Christian Education Update

Youth Group Mission Trip

Do you want to join youth and adults from West Parish for meaningful week of service this Summer? The Youth Group, led by Olivia Gaspar, is planning a mission trip to Puerto Rico with Team Effort Missions to do a construction project in a disadvantaged neighborhood. (This has changed from our previous location.) Middle School Youth and above are welcome to join, as are adults. If you are not able to join the trip, you can still support us by donating (put a dedicated donation in the offering plate on Sundays) or by participating in one of our fundraisers. The first is Super Bowl Baskets of snacks and treats for enjoying during the game. Sign up by emailing vgaisford@gmail.com and you'll receive your basket after church on February 5th.

All Ages Sunday School

The children's Sunday School classes will be continuing a series of lessons on the parables of Jesus. Jesus often taught in parables, which we describe as mysterious, wonderful stories that sometimes open up to us and sometimes don't, as evidenced by the disciple's frequent requests to Jesus to explain them. Adult Sunday School has continued to focus on trying different kinds of spiritual practices, like Storytelling and Lectio Divina prayer.

Children's Choir

All children are invited to join the West Parish Church children's choir. We will sing a variety of spiritually-centered songs in an inclusive, supportive environment. This is a part of West Parish Church Christian Education and is free! All are welcome. Registration includes a commitment for the children to attend as many rehearsals as possible.

Choir will be 2nd and 4th Sundays, 9-9:45 AM in the 1826 Room, downstairs:

- February 12
- February 26
- March 12
- March 26
- April 9 (Sing in Church / Palm Sunday)
- April 23 (Sing in Church / Earth Day!)
- May 14
- June 11 (Sing in Church / Children's Sunday)



We will plan to sing in a retirement home in late May.

We'd like to purchase robes for the children and hand bells as well. Donations to the Children's Choir for this purpose are welcome.

VALENTINES DAY PARENTS NIGHT OUT

FEBRUARY 11TH, 5:00-8:00 PM

1826 ROOM

Sponsored by Christian Education

Kids will have a fun Valentine's party with crafts, games, snacks, and a movie. Adults get a kid-free night to celebrate Valentine's day.

Suggested donation \$8 per child (\$20 family maximum).

Sign-up by RSVP or on the sign-up sheet at coffee hour in Fellowship Hall. Space is limited.

Community members and friends are welcome, but must sign-up before hand. If you have a friend who would like to come, please have her/his parent contact Christian Education Director, Victoria Gaisford, via West Parish's Facebook page, email or phone, vgaisford@gmail.com or 978-475-3528.

All kids must have a permission slip on file for the West Parish Church Children's Program or fill one out specifically for this event.

We hope you can join us!



WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

Do you want to support a thriving program at West Parish? Programs in Christian Education at West Parish Church are limited by the amount of volunteers we have.

Recruiting volunteers has been a bit harder of late, so please consider volunteering to assist in children's Sunday School, Youth Group, or facilitating discussion in Adult Sunday School. Support will be provided!



Please contact Director of Christian Education, Victoria Gaisford, at vgaisford@gmail.com. Remember that you do not have to be a parent of current Sunday School students to volunteer.

UPCOMING EVENTS

WOMEN'S EVENING CIRCLE

**FEBRUARY 9TH AT 7:15 PM
IN FELLOWSHIP HALL**

All Women (members and friends) of West Parish are invited to attend GAME NIGHT with Deb Schroeder and Kathy Vano.



Please join us. Refreshments will be served. ALL members and friends (women and men) are encouraged to attend.

If you are not currently on the Women's Evening Circle email list and plan to attend, please contact Pat Greer at pgreer1029@gmail.com or 978-975-1185.



SUSTAINABLE HOUSE OF WORSHIP WORKSHOP

**Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light
FEBRUARY 12TH AT 1:30 PM - 5:00 PM**

Interested in decreasing your use of fossil fuels and the contribution they make to global warming? Lower your utility bills to free up funds for mission & ministry? Are you interested in learning more about solar energy?

This Informative, hands-on workshop conducted by Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light will evaluate the essential areas of energy use and costs in your House of Worship:

- Electricity
- Solar Power
- Heat & Air Conditioning
- Building Envelope
- Behavior



Join us at South Church, 41 Central Street, Andover MA

- Presenters: Tom Nutt-Powell, Jim Nail, and Bill Schroeder
- Registration: Online at www.MIPandL.org or at the door via check
- Fee: \$20/person

CALL TO CARE

Please contact the West Parish Church office, 978 475-3528, with the names of any church member experiencing a life event in which church members may assist, i.e. Birth, funeral receptions, cards, meals, etc.



COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

Members of Andover faith communities will gather to kick-off a year long conversation about race in America. Join us at the Andover Library on Wednesday, February 15 at 7:00 PM to watch and discuss a film together. Then each faith community will continue the conversation "on their own" with a book study, and then we'll reconvene with a closing event.



SUNDAY MORNING PARKING

As you know, there are only a few parking spaces along Reservation Road directly opposite the church. We respectfully request that if you are able, you park elsewhere around the green so that those parking spaces on the road can be used by those who need to be close to the building.

Thank you for your cooperation!



WINTER STORM ALERT!!



If Sunday worship service or Sunday School are canceled due to severe weather, it will be announced on News 7, WHDH-TV, Facebook and Email.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINISTRY OF OUTREACH

FEBRUARY MISSION

Lazarus House

Lazarus House Ministries helps head of households and individuals living in poverty regain their dignity and become self-sufficient members of our community by offering emergency shelter, food and clothing to people in crisis and then providing transitional housing advocacy, health services, education and work preparation to permanently break the cycle of poverty.



NEIGHBORS IN NEED FOOD COLLECTION AND BLESSING



West Parish Church collects non-perishable food items for donation to Neighbors In Need. However, there will no longer be a formal monthly distribution of paper bags for Neighbors in Need food collections -- but the yellow bin can be used for drop offs at any time.

Please continue to support this important project . We will continue to give monthly reports on the activity generated. This is a very worthwhile undertaking and is a tangible way of saying "We care".

Thank you from The Ministry of Outreach. Please let us know if you have any concerns ---- Ellen Harmoning, Pat Greer, Jenn Harmoning, Kay Tustison, Karen Olsen and Mary Gibney.



NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

February 13th is the deadline for the March Newsletter.

Please email your articles or notices to:
www.westparishchurch@verizon.net.



AFTER WORSHIP FELLOWSHIP HOUR

After Worship fellowship hour will be sponsored by **Nominating Committee and the Ministry of Worship** for the month of February. Please join us!



MISTRAL VALENTINE CONCERT

FEBRUARY 12TH AT 5:00 PM

Mistral Valentine Concert, Sunday, February 12, 5:00 PM, West Parish Church - This year Mistral will present "Love in the Bell Epoque" a program that traces the flowering of French culture during the turn of the century with passionate works by Duparc, Fauré, and Debussy.

For more information, contact Mistral at: www.Mistralmusic.org or 978.474.6222.



2016/2017 CHAIRPERSONS/OFFICERS

GOVERNING BOARD

Governing Board Chair	John Pearson
Clerk	Blake Martin
Treasurer	Jennifer Harmoning
Moderator	Steve Vano

MINISTRIES

Education	Fitz Granger
Fellowship	Ed Pass
Outreach	Ellen Harmoning
Stewardship	Chris Swain
Worship	Jill Sergeant

COMMISSIONS

Investments	David Bertetti
Operations	Pat Denny
Collector	Art Clark

COMMITTEES

Flowers	Abby Martin
Music	Ed Pass
Nominating	Heather Gaspar
Planned Giving	Frank Hopkins
Smith Purdon	
Women's Evening Circle	Pam Denny/Pat Greer

CHURCH STAFF

Senior Minister	Rev. Katrina Wuensch
Director of Music	Yoo-Kyung Kim
Office Administrator	Elizabeth Collins
Temp Office Administrator	Larisa Henderson
Director of Christian Education	Victoria Gaisford
Sexton	Ed Pass
Wedding Coordinator	Kathy Vano
Cemetery Superintendent	Mark Atwood

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Address service requested